



**Like us on Facebook for agency updates & info!** 

### **Reminder Calls**

Monthly customers will receive an automated call the day before distribution reminding you to pick up your box. If you no longer want to receive calls, press 7 at the end of the call to opt out. If you are not currently receiving calls and would like to, please call 989-386-3805 to update or verify your phone number.

### **Your Commodity Box: Re-use or Recycle?**



- Return **clean** boxes to us at the next distribution so that we can **reuse** them after disinfection.
- **Recycle** boxes through your residential recycling service if they are **dirty, stained**, or have been **exposed to pests**

### **Focus On: Volunteer Income Tax Assistance (VITA)**

Free tax preparation assistance begins in February for seniors and low-to-moderate income households!

The Volunteer Income Tax Assistance program (VITA) is an IRS program managed by partners all over the country, including Community Action Agencies.

IRS trained and certified volunteers work with community members to prepare their taxes safely, confidentially, and at no cost to the community members.

Free tax preparation includes Federal Income Tax Returns, State Income Tax Returns, and all Credits including Earned Income Tax Credits, Home Heating Credits, and Homestead Property Tax Credits.

To find a participating organization in your area, call 2-1-1 or visit [irs.treasury.gov/freetaxprep](http://irs.treasury.gov/freetaxprep).

### **Immune Health**

The immune system is the body's way of protecting itself from infection and disease. Each month, your CSFP box will contain a variety of fruits, vegetables, protein, and healthy grains to help keep your heart healthy. You can help your immune system stay strong by following these tips below.

**Eat Well:** Eating well means emphasizing plenty of fruits and vegetables, lean protein, whole grains, and fat-free or low-fat milk and milk products. Eating well also means limiting saturated fats, cholesterol, salt, and added sugars.

**Be Physically Active:** Regular physical activity helps you feel better, sleep better, and reduce anxiety. Combined with eating well, physical activity can help a person maintain a healthy weight.

**Maintain a Healthy Weight:** Safe ways to help maintain a healthy weight include reducing stress, eating healthy foods, getting enough sleep, and engaging in regular physical activity.

**Get Enough Sleep:** Scientific evidence is building that sleep loss can negatively affect different parts of the immune system.

Make sure to visit your doctor or medical care professionals for more about your immune health and to find out what is best for you. For more information about keeping your immunity strong visit [www.cdc.gov](http://www.cdc.gov)

*Reprinted from materials provided by the Michigan Department of Education Household Nutrition Programs. The material provided is intended to be used as general information only and should not replace the advice of your physician. Always consult your physician for individual medical care.*

### **Food Safety Tip**

Canned foods need to be stored in a cool, dry place. Never put them above the stove, under a sink, in a damp garage or basement, or any place exposed to high or low temperature extremes or excessive moisture. Temperatures below 85F are best.

Don't consume food from heavily rusted or swollen cans. Cans that are heavily rusted can have tiny holes in them, allowing bacteria to enter.

Check your cupboards every few weeks and rotate your canned foods, using canned foods you've had the longest first. If you store canned foods for an emergency, check and change out your cans annually.

### **Questions? Give Us a Call!**

**Bay, Clare, Gladwin, Mecosta,  
Midland & Osceola Counties:** 989-386-3805

**Gratiot, Ionia, Isabella, & Montcalm Counties:** 616-754-9315

**Online:** [www.mmcaa.org](http://www.mmcaa.org)

*This institution is an equal opportunity provider.*

## Featured Commodity: Canned Beef

### Uses & Tips:

- Beef supplies many nutrients such as protein, B vitamins (niacin, thiamin, riboflavin, and B6), vitamin E, iron, zinc, and magnesium.
- Proteins function as building blocks for bones, muscles, cartilage, skin, and blood. They are also building blocks for enzymes, hormones, and vitamins.
- Canned/pouch beef is fully cooked, so it is safe to eat without cooking. If heated, serve right away or refrigerate leftovers in a container that is not made from metal.
- Canned/pouch beef can be used in dishes such as lasagna, casseroles, spaghetti sauce, or chili.

### Upcoming Distribution Schedule

If someone else is picking up your food for you, please send a signed note allowing them to do so. We will ask the person picking up your food for their ID. If you missed your distribution you can attend "Make Up Day" at our Food Warehouse, located at 2300 East Ludington Drive, Clare. Please note that scheduling changes may occur. Changes will be posted on [www.mmcaa.org](http://www.mmcaa.org), Facebook, and sent to monthly customers via robocall. **You may also call 989-386-6849 for a recording of all upcoming dates, including dates for private sites.**

- **Albright Shores Eagles:** February 8, 10:30-11:30
- **Alma Elks:** February 28, 9:30-11:00
- **Bay City Town Center:** February 9, 1:00-2:30
- **First Congregational Church, Harrison** (*replaces Clare Co Fairground Distro during Winter Season*): Feb 15, 10:00 - 11:30
- **Clare Moose Lodge:** February 17, 10:00-11:30
- **Essexville Community Church:** February 7, 12:30-1:30
- **Evart Moose Lodge:** February 16, 11:00-12:00
- **Gladwin Free Methodist Church:** February 14, 10:00-11:30
- **God's Helping Hands, Remus:** February 2, 2:00-3:00
- **Grace Community Church, Howard City:** February 3, 1:30-2:30
- **Gratiot Commission on Aging:** February 28, 12:30-1:30
- **Greendale Township Offices:** February 1, 1:00-2:00
- **Greenville Armory:** February 3, 10:30-11:30
- **Immanuel Lutheran Church, Mt. Pleasant:** Feb 23, 10:00-11:00
- **Ionia Moose Lodge:** February 22, 10:30-11:30
- **Marion VFW Post:** February 16, 1:30-2:30
- **Pinconning United Methodist:** February 8, 1:00-2:00
- **Resurrection Life Church, Big Rapids:** February 2, 11:00-12:00
- **Sanford American Legion:** February 1, 10:30-11:30
- **United Methodist Church of Reed City:** February 17, 2:00-3:00
- **Food Warehouse Make-Up Day:** February 24, 9:00-11:00

Customers must inform Mid Michigan CAA of changes in income or household composition within 10 days of the change.

## January Recipe: Shortcut Beef Veggie Soup

### Ingredients:

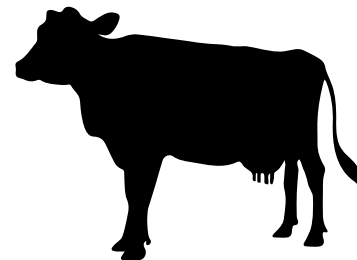
- 2 tbsp olive oil
- 1 cup diced yellow onion
- 1 can CSFP beef
- 2 cans tomato soup + 2 cans water (or additional water as directed on can packaging)
- 2 cans mixed vegetables
- 1/2 tsp chili powder (or more to taste)
- Black pepper to taste
- Parmesan cheese (optional)

### Directions

1. In a large pot, sauté the diced onions in the olive oil over medium-high heat, until softened.
2. Rinse and drain ground beef, add to pot with onions. Allow beef and onions to saute together for a few minutes.
3. Add the tomato soup concentrate, water, and canned veggies. Bring to a simmer for 10 minutes.
4. Serve; top with parmesan cheese if desired.

Leftover soup may be frozen in individual portions for later use!

**Trivia!** How many cowhides are needed to supply the NFL with enough footballs to last one season?



**Answer:** It takes approximately 3,000 cow hides to provide all NFL teams with enough footballs to last one season.